

INVESTING IN VIRGINIA'S CHILDREN

Announcement of Community Sub-grants Available from VA Department of Social Services

The Virginia Department of Social Services announces the application and selection process for up to five community sub-grants. The purpose and intent of this Request for Applications (RFA) is to award sub-grants to collaborative partnerships of public and private sector agencies in Virginia to plan, develop, establish, expand or improve the quality of child care for young children up to age 5, with the ultimate goal of helping children enter school ready to learn. The sub-grants will bring together local stakeholders to design and develop a comprehensive infrastructure at the local level that supports seamless quality early care and education prior to school entry. The sub-grants are competitive grants awarded on a one-time basis by the Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS).

Requests for Applications (RFAs) are now posted on the following Web sites:

the VDSS Web site: <http://www.dss.virginia.gov> and
the Governor's site: <http://www.governor.virginia.gov/>.

The deadline for receiving applications is December 15, 2004. Selection of the sub-grantees will be determined by a set of criteria described in the RFA, including the strength of collaboration and the quality of the proposed program.

Through these sub-grants, VDSS hopes to create or strengthen local and regional partnerships providing coordinated, cost-efficient means for parents to access a comprehensive system of early care and education, thereby improving children's preparedness for school. VDSS is looking for creative, comprehensive, and innovative partnerships dedicated to excellence in achieving this goal; committed leadership; sound program designs; and evidence of sustainability.

VDSS intends that the proposed collaborative programs will ultimately contribute to a positive statewide impact on the following critical objectives toward the goal of improving the school readiness of Virginia's children:

- Improving the quality and accessibility of child care for all families
- Supporting children with special needs
- Improving child care teacher education and retention
- Improving access to health and other services
- Providing support to the families of young children
- Improving collaboration and coordination of services for young children and families
- Improving the economy of Virginia's communities

A statewide conference is scheduled for Thursday, October 28 in Richmond to provide information and assistance to applicants. Interested parties should complete the registration form and return to VDSS by October 18. Please note that space is limited and prompt registration is advised. Conference registration begins at 9:30 a.m., with the program beginning at 10:00. Lunch will be served at no cost to the attendees. The conference will adjourn by 4:00 p.m.